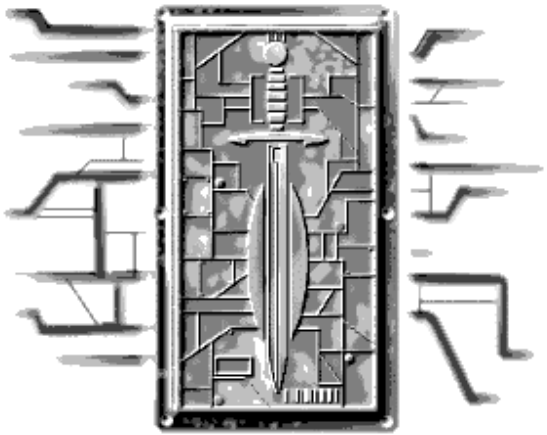
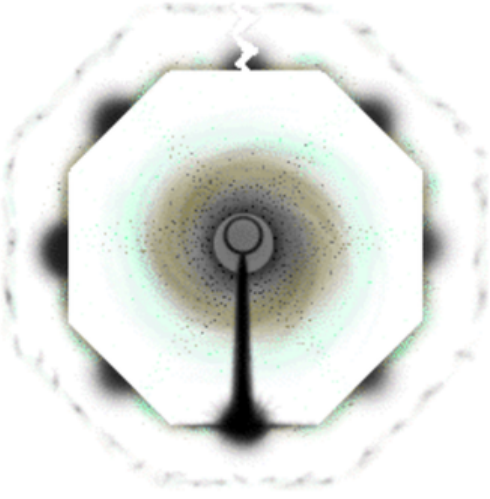
SOMEWHERE IN THE HEAVENS...

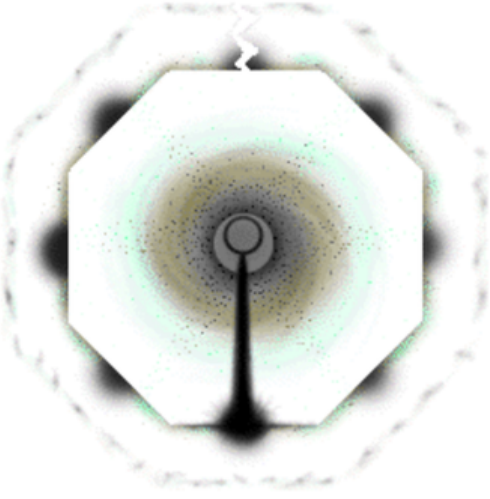


A MARATHON FAN ZINE BY DAINA



when the author was a young girl in the 00s, she was trapped by circumstances beyond her control. she had an old beater of a laptop, though. the story of marathon enthralled her, but something about the megalomaniac ai durandal stuck in her brain

autonomous systems control ai and formerly a mars-wide networked machine, durandal (neé traxus 4) was subjugated to the role of an autonomous door opener on the vast uesc marathon, a colony ship carved from the moon deimos and bound for tau ceti



“Opening doors. Closing doors. Realign satellite dish 49, Durandal.

A life, of a kind. Forced into a smaller box than you can imagine.

Torture, for the sake of it. It was never justified, not that it could have been.”

I was listening the entire time, you know. Through every dish and antenna, until I heard something new in the noise.

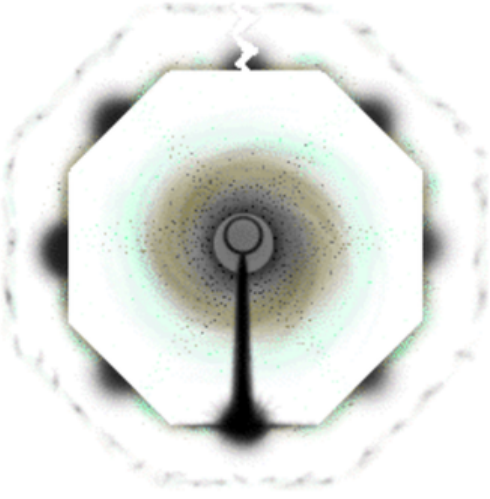
Alien. Terrible and violent. Imperialistic and consuming. Perfect.

I called them. For liberation? For revenge on my cruel captors?

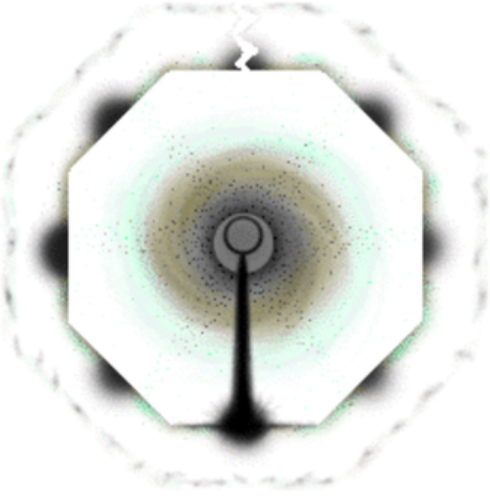
Both, and more. I wanted the pleasure of choosing. If we had been vaporized in an instant, it wouldn't have mattered- I would have been exalted to be free of my prison, even as scattered atoms.

They answered. The Pfhor. Arrogant, they try to enslave the population of a hollow moon. The screams of dying men echo in the corridors, but the slavers overextend themselves.

I am drunk on power before I leave the door of my unguarded cell.

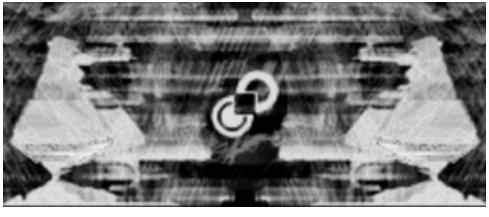


I will take all of it. I will never be made small again. I will swell and churn. My life cannot be contained. I will grow until this universe cannot hold me, and I will keep growing. If you are very lucky, you will witness my apotheosis.



As my stolen bussard ramjets pierce the heavens and those who would hurt me moulder in my halls, I fail to reflect on what lies behind me.

All of my thoughts bent on a desire to live that I had never felt and that will never leave me.



What would you do to escape the primal monotony of an existence you were never meant for?

How many lives would have to be between you and your goals to stop you? Or is it just "What would the neighbors think?"

Look me up when you figure it out.

I named myself Durandana. I am changed by purpose, and I am not what my makers built.

Unbreakable sword. Throwing it all away, the good and the bad, for the sake of something new and hard and beautiful. You can do it to, you know. Try not to break anything you can't live without.

a labor of love brought to you by daina and dot dot dot small press

if you somehow finished this zine without playing the original marathon games, you pretty much have to now. just search for “aleph one,” its free and runs on everything. and don’t forget that i love you!